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SENATE SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE DRAFT REPORT
THE NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATES - B TEAM EPISODE
CONCERNING SOVIET STRATEGIC CAPABILITIES AND OBJECTIVES

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

--Critique the principal judgments and conduct of NIE 11-3/8-76 and the B Team report, without attempting to judge which group's estimates are correct.

--Recommend improvements on the quality and utility of future NIEs on Soviet strategic capabilities and objectives.

KEY FINDINGS ON THE NIE 11-3/8 SERIES

--They inadequately serve the needs of the President and senior policymakers, and indeed perform a disservice by the narrowness of their focus on "strategic" forces rather than on a broader range of "strategic" threats and opportunities.

--They fail to set strategic force developments in a broader context of Soviet objectives, policies and other developments, largely because they are prepared by weapons specialists.

--They contained in their judgments subsumed net assessments done in an unacknowledged and amateurish fashion.

--Their preparation should make more extensive use of knowledge from outside the Intelligence Community.

--They reflect a preoccupation of the Intelligence Community (and the policymakers) with Soviet strategic weapons, and an allocation of resources to the subject disproportionate to other threats.

KEY FINDINGS ON THE B TEAM EXERCISE

--The B Team was not broadly representative and was not devoid of political pressure.

--The hard line B Team experiment was not constructive, and the press leaks undercut the integrity of the estimating process.

--It demonstrated the lack of a confident agreed US judgment about the reasons for Soviet strategic weapons developments (Soviet objectives).

--It demonstrated the need to improve the system of producing national estimates.

--It demonstrated that the subject of Soviet strategic objectives is an extraordinary problem for US policymakers calling for extraordinary remedy.

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RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE REPORT

Organization to Produce National Estimates

--To be done by a widely representative, highly skilled, broadly experienced and continuing collegial body assisted by a similarly expert staff.

--Headed by a scholar or diplomat and composed mainly of new blood from outside the Intelligence Community.

--Supported by competing and alternative estimates, and by study groups occasionally convened by the President or the NSC to address critical questions.

--Located close to the policymakers in downtown Washington.

The Relationship of Intelligence to Consumers

--Requirements for NIEs should be decided in close coordination with consumers by contacts at all policymaking levels made by active, imaginative leaders.

--The estimative body should accept questions from consumers but should be free of outside pressure or fear of uncongenial reception of their findings.

Format and Content of NIE 11-3/8 Series

--Two versions--one for the President and NSC and one for the bureaucracy.

--Improved editorial standards, with standardized definitions of key terms annexed.

--Full expression of differing judgments and their bases.

--Highlight significant changes from previous estimates.

--Depiction of Soviet military developments so that they may be seen within the total context of Soviet life and policies and US and world developments.

--Each NIE fully self-contained rather than employing cross-references to other documents.

--Sophisticated objective net assessments conducted at the national level (implied but not stated that the NIE should not contain net assessments).

--NIE post-mortem to adjust collection and research.

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